

Newcastleton & District Community Council
Minutes of ORDINARY MEETING
10th September 2019 @ 7:00 pm village hall

Present: Laura Paterson (Vice Chair), Greg Cuthbert (Vice chair), Barbara Elborn (sec), Rob Irwin, Trevor Harrop, Joan Robson, Lyndsay Patterson, Ian Nicol, Cllr George Turnbull **Apologies:** Cllr Watson McAteer, Cllr Davie Paterson, Margaret Elliot. **Also present:** 17 members of the public

1. **Welcome** - LP welcomed all, explaining both SW (Chair) and AD had resigned creating 3 vacancies. SW would be hugely missed; he had played a valuable part in day to day liaison between the community and public sector agencies and done an outstanding job for his community over many years. He will be much missed by his colleagues who thanked him for his dedication and commitment to the community. AD's resignation explaining his decision was shared.

AGM next month, procedures for nominees for 3 vacancies incl in newsletter to all h-holds. LP outlined new procedure for contacting CC members to raise issues; central email account and all matters in writing received via this or the new post box located in Buccleuch House. Details in the newsletter.

2. **Police report** – no report received. Continuing concern about lack of local police presence and no follow up on recent reported break ins. Still no further forward with central email account address so that MOP could email concerns to the central support team. Cllr Turnbull to follow up.
3. **Minutes of the last meeting – Aug 2019** proposed by LP, seconded by IN, signed by LP

4. Matters arising:

- i. **Flooding questionnaire:** GC reminded all the flood survey closes end Sept and asked for completed returns to BH. Important to show community support to seek SBC support to take it forward to Scot Gov for funding. Final outputs shared in Oct meeting.
- ii. **Broadband Update:** RI reported meeting with DSSB & R100 team; DSSB completed by Mar 31st few extra properties locally included, R100 procurement decisions Dec 31st, if Open Reach then much easier to determine timeline of roll out, if ANO then likely to be spring till this is known. Details published at postcode level for anyone to check their own h-hold. Anyone is at liberty to accept an alternative service provider, but they should ensure that they do so knowing they may eliminate themselves from R100.

April 1st the USO – universal service obligation comes into effect – this is for minimum of 30mgbs download delivery. If your service doesn't comply then you can request the service to be upgraded to the value of £3.4k towards any upgrade, the difference paid by the h-holder just like telecoms, electric, gas connections.

Requested Cllr Turnbull follow up request to Douglas Scott re request an expression of interest for education premises at Buccleuch House – this will mean a full fibre connection ensuring better access for the proposed enterprise & learning centre.

- iii. **Community transport conference/meeting feedback:** Following two meetings with SBC, attendance at Transport Forum it was agreed with SBC that to move forward two actions would be taken; on-bus surveys during Aug on all routes and face to face sessions in Buccleuch house on Sept 2nd with Bus Survey Scotland. Greig from BSS pleased with response; thank you to all who made the effort to go and feedback on local transport issues.

SBC highlight in their report that services to Hawick are subsidised by £8 pr journey currently. Not clear what the next steps are for local changes and outcomes from the study. CC will request follow up meeting with SBC to include Telfords & Health Centre – real concerns about accessing social support in Hawick and other places for clinics etc. GC confirmed that the recent Scot Gov extra £500m to be given to transport is for city centre and highland transport schemes. CC reiterated that SoSEP had put transport as a pillar of its new approach so where were the proposals and how were they integrated into the SBC plan, why weren't they working cross country with D&G to solve matters?

- iv. **CCTV update** it is established that no planning permission is required, just budget to get the scheme underway. SBC continue to insist that funding applications will not be considered for any scheme until the outcome of the consultation is concluded. Having been invited to participate by community officers

it is apparent that this is only focused on current schemes which SBC operate and has no bearing on our proposal; community led and operated. The CC continue to challenge SBC on their intransigence regarding this matter and again seek the support of our elected representatives to take this matter forward to the executive on their behalf to seek resolution.

- v. **Langholm Moor BE updated;** Program/timetable now established about what needs to be done; feasibility, showstoppers, valuation, negotiation, community consultation once work known, business planning. Grant applications; NDCT raised £38k to date to undertake feasibility assessments to cover; forestry, farming, renewables and leisure. Waiting further £29k from SLF decision Oct 4th. Tenders out work commences 23rd/30th Sept for leisure, renewables, Oct 4th forestry & farming.
- vi. **Need community help** – common land known as **Cow Hill**. Anticipating securing at least this element of land for the community, many believing it is 'ours' given grazing and peat rights etc. However, Buccleuch see it as just land and are treating it as a normal sale with average values, this has huge implications on the price, it is very important that the community can share any evidence it has to support the claim of common land. We have a legal team working with us on a pro-bono basis to help us unravel this, but we need to provide them with any evidence so they can create a timeline going back to 1793. References in history books, family anecdotes, photographs of livestock taken up by the shepherd/cow herds, anything that we might have in our Heritage archives; anything that might support the case that this is common land. Please convey to any CC member.

5. Planning/Housing

- a. Home Energy Scotland Insulation: HEEPS – 37 properties have been considered viable to insulate with a further 3 to be surveyed this week making 40 homes warmer for this winter. CC will keep pressure up so that those with solid walls who have yet to be completed will be done before the winter. ANY VIABLE PROPERTY QUALIFIES. NDCT/CC praised for efforts to engage the community to do this; an exemplar to other communities to show them the benefits of doing this. Thank you to all the households who took the plunge we wish you all a warm and cosy winter this year!
- b. Faw Law Wind Farm proposal/response not submitted yet, not enough time to compose response; no community feedback submitted to the consultation, now closed. Reaffirm original concerns re heights, impact on flooding, disturbance of the peat bogs.
- c. **Conservation status/Scrutiny Committee** no update to report on conservation issues
- d. **Planning Applications for review** – BE presented Buccleuch House proposals: Ground floor Enterprise & Learning Centre comprising 2 SME's & 3 meeting room spaces/classrooms, enlarged foyer, staircase removed creating space and allowing light into the building. Disabled access from rear, plus disabled WC and baby changing. Space for 5 employees; 2 existing and 3 new posts; subject to funding; **Newcastle Development Officer** will be responsible for driving all the community projects forward and liaising with the relevant bodies to seek funding to do this. A **Learning & Enterprise Manager** will manage the new learning centre Hub – working with SoSEP & Borders College a community pilot for the **Hub & Spoke model for outreach learning**; each room will be equipped with direct access to classes accessible directly from the village. Our young people, school leavers, businesses, and anyone else who wishes to take daytime & night classes can do so; booking a place and attend via the direct links at BH. The practicalities of how this will work need to be ironed out, but it works in the highlands which is a model of success to work towards. Subject to the outcome of the current Buccleuch community asset acquisition of 43.1 ha of assets; Poly, playing fields, bowling club, allotments, holm show field, golf club, riverside and sawmill plantation we will appoint a **Leisure Assets Manager**. This person's role will be to work with all the community groups to deliver the changes that everyone asked for last year when we undertook the second major community consultation; over 230 responded; two major things came out of it – the need to provide local learning & improved local & accessible leisure facilities so more people could do more all year. Subject to funding this program will commence early in 2020.

Top floor accessed via a new rear staircase converted to 4 bedrooms a bunk house with en-suite shower rooms. Basic, clean and warm for users; can take between 10-16 depending on room set up. Aimed at bikers, walkers, back-packer market; fastest growing sector of tourism, village ideally placed to capitalise. Deliberately designed to be no frills so users spend budget locally helping to sustain local businesses. We expect the bunkhouse to be 60/70% occupied within the first 2/3yrs – that is a lot of extra revenue coming into the village during the off-peak season. It will be known as Bunks@Buccleuch.

Plans submitted to SBC on display at BH for the next few weeks. Scot Gov confirmed that this project was one of the 55 invited to proceed to the next stage of funding from the 103 projects that applied to the fund – over £96m was requested but likely commitment will be £20-£25m. The community needs to continue to work hard to achieve this for everyone, there is huge competition for budget, we need to ensure we get our share.

Buccleuch House is the first major plank in our community development plan, but it is also THE most important; a place of learning and enterprise in the village so we don't have to take 2 buses and 3 hours to get to a campus, or a whole morning out of our businesses to attend an online business skills course at Selkirk or Hawick. We cannot have the former without the latter – everything we do must wash its face so there is no liability on the community, the bunkhouse ensures that we can provide the learning centre. Increased investment coming into the south of Scotland over the next 2-10 years will mean a huge focus on inward investment, connectivity & tourism. Newcastleton needs to be ready to exploit that for community gain. The CC and NDCT firmly believe that we must capitalise on the spotlight that this investment creates to help provide a better future for our families.

6. Public Forum/Community Issues/Open questions

- a. **Telecon box Douglas Square** – now repaired, still evidence of need and very much required. Cllr Turnbull confirmed the community should clean and maintain its appearance.
- b. **Bottle bank** – 2 banks still broken/not removed. More frequent collections required as a result. Current circumstances now 3 months+ with constant calling, pressurising from SW to no avail. Cllr Turnbull requested to seek definitive timescale to resolving this matter.
- c. **Community Recycling van** – in the absence of Cllr Paterson Cllr Turnbull was asked to confirm why the trial was being held in Jed which was only 7miles away from a refuse centre and the consultation included regional outposts that didn't have access? As part of the Fit for 2024 proposals Cllr Haslam confirmed that Newcastleton would be part of the pilot but this promise had been reneged upon. When was it coming, what day of the month and what times of the day?
- d. **Dog pooh** – posters required. Cllr Turnbull to request A4 pdf files to be printed locally and displayed.
- e. **Road closures/repairs** – currently underway causing disruption but cannot be avoided given need to strengthen kerbsides to maintain road integrity going forward. Welcome but not helpful. Effort to seek funding to resurface main road as well as Douglas Square to continue.
- f. **Eildon** – posts on social media requesting house swaps cause for concerns given vetting procedures. Cllr Paterson/Eildon to be made aware and followed through. MOP suggested a welcome pack be prepared for new arrivals. Anyone able to make time to do this and provide contents was welcome to undertake this task.
- g. **Public Toilets/Bike rack** – Cllr Turnbull to confirm if new toilet seat and coat hook had been installed and when the bike rack would be relocated to Douglas Square.
- h. **Campaign for Borders Rail** – currently promoting a funding drive to raise budget to support the push to Carlisle. Membership still only £5 annually.
- i. **Music Festival AGM** – all reminded; Sept 13th 8pm in Grapes
- j. **Douglas Square parking** – LP reminded all that the CC was the venue to share any grievance not social media. The CC's role was to represent the views of the community but if these were not forthcoming at the CC then they could not be conveyed. She stated that the CC worked collaboratively as a team and that no single person took decisions. The changes to car park regulations started in 2018 as a result of carparks across the Borders experiencing travellers which were difficult to move on as a result of no signage. SBC undertook a review; ALL carparks and new Traffic Regulation Orders were passed in Dec 2018. The CC has no record of the changes being proposed until it contacted SBC to request the Squares' closure for an event when this came to light. The CC conveyed proposed changes during CC meetings, minutes were issued and displayed but not one member of the public complained. New signage stipulating the new rules was impacting on HGV's drivers, but all accepting the need for no overnight camping in the square. Efforts would be

made to address the signage so that normal parking conditions returned, excepting overnight camping.

7. Correspondence:

- a. Lord Lieutenant's Volunteering Event – Springwood Hall Sept 25th
- b. SBC Area Partnership and Community Grant Review – closes Sept 25th all CC members to respond please
- c. Rachel Hamilton MSP – response ref Hawick High School conveyed
- d. Area Partnership agenda and pack circulated – GC/BE to attend

8. AOB

The CC warmly welcomed the CCR donation of £400 towards the CC funds for grass cutting for 2019. This would be used with the other contributions to seek match funding to try to overcome the challenges this presents next season.

9. Next meetings:

Date/time	Subject	Venue	Attending
Sept 17th	Area Partnership Meeting	Hawick Town Hall	All welcome
Sept 25th	Lord Lieutenant's Volunteering Event	Springwood Hall, Kelso	Volunteers from 2pm
Oct 8th	Community Council Meeting & AGM	Village Hall	All Welcome